

# GOOD TASTE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE THUNDER BAY ATARI ST ENTHUSIASTS

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DECEMBER 1988

## The New Good Taste

As you can see Good Taste has a new look. Neville has handed the production of the newsletter over to me partly because the additional responsibility of acting as temporary treasurer as well as president of our user group has left him even more pressed for time than he was before and partly because I wanted to have a try at it. As well, I have a new printer, a Hewlett Packard DeskJet, which will make the newsletter easier to read.

It's hard to appreciate just how difficult and time-consuming producing a newsletter is until you try to do it. Text seems to have a will of its own, placing itself wherever it pleases, changing its point size or disappearing altogether. This edition of the newsletter is very much a lesson in learning how to use my publishing program. I just don't have the time to adjust things like spacing and kerning. Next month's newsletter may very well look completely different.

In addition to the change in print quality and the change to an 8 page booklet format which Neville suggested, there will be some other changes you can look forward to in Good Taste. First, I am going to do some arm twisting and you will see more articles written by TASTE members. If you have a new program that you like or especially if it's a piece of garbage and you don't like it, let us know in a review. Even if you're busy and don't have the time to write, send me your review in point-form and I'll rewrite it.

The second change arises from the realisation that our club meetings haven't been useful to everyone. I want this newsletter to address a

wider range of interest, not just that of the hard core members who attend all meetings. In a future edition I'll include a survey which will give me a better idea of what you want out of the club. You can, as well, write or phone me if you have questions or suggestions.

Keep in mind, finally, as time to renew your membership comes around that our club is growing: ST's and Mega's are selling well and new members are joining. More interesting public domain software is coming available and you can get that through the club (thanks especially to Ed Giertuga). Have a happy holiday. Tom Theodoropoulos

## The November Meeting

November 30 was designated Games Night and as such it was our most informal meeting to date. Although Doug Orlowski, Roy Stokes, Tom Theodoropoulos and Ed Giertuga brought their equipment, only two machines were sufficient for the 10 or so members who attended.

Everybody just drifted back and forth between the two machines to watch or try out some new games. Doug had a special connector that allowed the use of four joysticks in one machine and for a while there were four players competing against each other at some sort of action game. I don't know who won since I was looking at The Ultimate Military Simulator playing on the other computer at the time.

Several members renewed their memberships at the meeting and most people bought a disk-of-the-month. It was also decided that once again we would forego the December meeting because of the holidays.

## Comdex: The Major Computer Show of the Year

By Darlah J. Pine and Sandy Wilson

We will try to fill you in on everything that was at the show though we probably won't remember it all. Atari didn't show any new machines except for a glimpse of the portable the day before, but there was a tremendous number of other things to see.

Atari Corporation was showing Microsoft Write again as well as Ultrascript. Ultrascript is a Postscript-compatible interpreter used for printing files with the Atari Mega and Atari Laser only at this time. For now, you have to save the file to disk in Postscript format and then run Ultrascript. Softlogik is looking into bypassing this extra step in order to send directly to the laser. Ultrascript should be available in early 1989. Price to be announced (TBA).

There were several desktop publishing programs being shown. Softlogik was showing its just-released Pagestream, and Timeworks was showing its full line of products with nothing new. Atari was showing Deskset, its high-end desktop publishing program. Though being displayed, it still needed final touches and the manual was not even off to the printer. Date of release: maybe never.

Calamus, from ISD Marketing, will be shipping immediately after Comdex. Users of Pagemaker will note impressive similarities. In a recent article in Personal Publishing Magazine, users were asked for their wish list for Pagemaker. The amazing thing is that Calamus has four out of five things on that wish list. This is a must-have product. Price: \$299.

As previously mentioned, there was very little in the way of new hardware from Atari, but there was a

bit of confusion. Atari showed a rather large, very alpha laptop computer for a very large lap indeed. Or at least that's what was displayed the day before the show. At the last minute, it was taken out of view. A couple of days later, though, a more truly laptop-size model being shown privately to someone over in a corner. We don't know whether it was a working machine or a model, but it raised the possibility that a true laptop is on the way.

There were three transputers up and running, with an occasional demo from the stage. The PC-4 and the PC-5 were also being displayed with no new information regarding when they would reach the market in the U.S.

John Russel Innovations was displaying its JRI Genlock System for the ST. Genlock allows you to use drawing and animated programs in low and medium resolution mode to be combined with an outside video source such as a camera, VCR or camcorder. You can install the printed circuit board inside the Mega without any modifications or soldering. Genlock is hardware ONLY. No software is required. Suggested tentative pricing is \$500. Genlock is currently awaiting FCC approval. A version for the 1040 and 520 ST is now in development.

Neriki Computer Graphics from Australia was showing the Neriki Image Master. This software allows the ST to interface with the Polaroid Palette Image Recorder through the serial port. This combination enables a quick transfer of the screen image to 35mm slide, print or overhead transparency for graphic presentations. The software costs around \$600, and the Polaroid Palette lists for around \$2,000.

Navarone was showing its new version of ST SCAN, which allows you to print directly to the Atari SLM804 laser printer as if it were a copy

machine. The pictures may also be saved in DEGAS, IMG and Postscript format. The quality of the laser prints was very impressive! We saw somebody scan a \$100 bill and it's a good thing it was not printed on a light green paper, otherwise the Feds may be after him. Yes, the quality was that good.

Seymore-Radix was showing its image scanner with nothing new.

The Wuztek Omnimon GS monitor was being used in high resolution and looked quite good. This monitor is capable of displaying all resolutions using up to 128 grey scales. There were also a number of applications being shown using the Viking 2/91 monitor.

Antic was showing Cyberpaint as well as kicking off its new magazine, Amiga Plus. There was a box for Cyber Sculpt on the Cyberpaint desk, but it was not being shown when we were there. Cyber Sculpt allows you to add an array of 3D modeling tools and capabilities to Cyber Studio. Suggested Retail \$89.95

Human Technology was displaying ZZ-Lazy Paint, which is a drawing program from France. The result on your printer is one of extreme quality. It has all the functions of other paint programs plus a lot more. It utilizes powerful filtering functions to obtain 64 levels of shading. You can save your formats in IMG, PI3 and Postscript. Also being displayed was ZZ-Rough, which is a computer-assisted tool for artistic drawing. With ZZ-Rough, you can create renderings, sketches and drawings. In addition, there is a photocopier and a library of 3-dimensional objects that you can move and turn in space. Price TBA.

Abacus was showing Beckercad. The program lets you draw with ease with drop-down menus for beginners. The program has a powerful toolbox and an integrated programming

language oriented toward standard page description languages such as page script. Price TBA.

Abacus was also showing its Computer Viruses book that describes not only what computer viruses are but how to protect yourself from them. This book is written with the PC in mind, but it includes some sample listings in Basic, machine language and Pascal. Though it comes at a time of hype and we wonder if such a book will create more activity instead of halting such problems, it certainly might be worth looking into. Suggested price: \$18.95

Biolog Systems was showing MEDI-ST, a flexible package designed for physicians in private practice, that has been available in France for two years. It includes all the functions of a database, word-processor and telecommunication program, and allows graphics to be included with an individual patient record and/or follow-up instructions. A password system allows this package to be shared by more than one physician.

In the educational area, First Byte was showing its full line of educational wares for children. Computer Curriculum Corporation has a system designed for schools that allows you to have a complete educational package including math, reading, language skills and computer education. The system is available for all ages. For more information, call (415) 494-8450.

Several games were demoed. Electronic Arts was showing Zany Golf while we were there. Zany Golf is a miniature golf program with a few twists. It has jumping hamburgers, holes that move and lasers and energy orbs. It looks like this game will hold your interest. Also Advanced Dungeon and Dragons -- Heroes of the Lance. They did say that they were putting out a commercial version



of Monopoly. We were told it was to be much better than the PD versions of the game though we did not get a chance to view it. Price for the above programs:39.95

Spectrum HoloByte was showing "Falcon," the F-16 fighter simulation program. It looks like it is quite interesting and appears to be keyboard intensive. It is slated to be out at the end of November. Price:TBA.

FTL's next entry in the Dungeon Master series, Chaos Strikes Back, will hit the market around Christmas...hint disk will hit in about four weeks. The hint disk will be able to be loaded in when you get stuck at a certain point. The best part about it is it senses where you are and will not give you any hints other than the ones pertinent to where you are.

MichTron and Microdeal from England were sharing a booth. Viva was shown from their booth again as well as GFA Raytrace and HiSoft Basic. Microdeal products looked exciting. We saw a program called Tale Spin, and that is exactly what you can do. It allows you to create an adventure with graphics that can be reused on up to 50 different pages but using the minimum amount of memory. With the ability to import NEO/DEGAS pictures and an internal art package, it makes for a very easy creator for a new user as well as a computer-experienced one. You can also import St-Replay sound files for sound effects when a new page is displayed or when you click on a character. The best part about this is you can create adventures and lock them so no one can change your adventure, or leave it unlocked so those you share it with can add to and create a more intensive adventure. This is a must-have for any adventure lover. Price:possibly \$89.95 Jug was also mentioned, but we did not get a chance to see it.

There were a variety of programming languages available for the ST being shown. Mark Williams C was there. Costech Software Systems has COBOL/MST available as well as a shell that includes MS-DOS and Unix type commands. Omikron from Germany was showing its Basic, which is the "official Basic of Atari Germany." It includes an interpreter, compiler and libraries, but is not currently available in the U.S. They are looking for a U.S. company to distribute it.

Genie was promoting its product with a full staff including Neil Harris.

QMI was showing ST Professional. It was noted that it will be more active online now that the mad rush has partially passed. Coming soon from QMI is Disk Librarian. This product allows you to keep track of your software and data files with an easy-to-use Gem program. Disk Librarian allows you to sort, search and add comments to your database of files. The number of entries is limited only by the memory in your computer.

Intersect was showing Masterlink. Masterlink contains all the features of Interlink plus multiple buffers with buffer reformat, tabs, word wrap and search/replace. It has an advanced script language, which helps you to develop your own scripts. You will be able to execute your scripts in the background. A built-in answer mode gives you complete remote control. Masterlink will be available in the first quarter of 1989 with an upgrade policy available for registered users of Interlink. Price:\$59.95

Nite Lite Systems was demonstrating its the Lantech RS232 local area network. With this system you can control up to seven nodes, which can be computers, printers, terminals or modems. The Lantech Lan requires one meg of internal RAM to run. Price:\$799.

Atari continues to do well in the

music world. Hybrid Arts, Dr. T and Midisoft were there showing their current product lines, and Sonus was showing the new version of its scoring and sequencing package, Superscore 1.3. They have added a number of extra editing features as well as now allowing music to be entered using the mouse.

Passport Designs was demoing Master Tracks Jr and Master Tracks Pro. These programs retail for \$129.95 and \$349.95 respectively. The major difference between the two versions is the addition of a graphic step editor, which greatly enhances editing capabilities. The latest version of Master Tracks Pro (version 2.5) should be available now. SMPTE capabilities will be available with version 3.0, but no release date for that version was mentioned.

Legend Software Systems from Canada was showing its sequencing program, The Final Cut. This program is very user friendly. It utilizes animated tape reels and standard tape-recorder-type controls to facilitate easy input from the synthesizer. It also has a good variety of editing tools for everything from manipulating any section of your song to MIDI event editing and special effects. The Final Cut lists at \$89.95 and is available at Federated stores.

DLR (Digital Laboratory Research) was showing AMADEUS ST. This is a computer-assisted music learning program that is currently available in France. The program is designed for all skill levels, from beginner to professional, and includes instruction in music reading, theory and harmony. Also included are a couple of games, and the ability to score practice sessions to determine progress. Price: \$245.

ICD was showing its Fast Tape Backup. Need we say we all need this? Fast Tape Backup allows you to recover individual files on restore

under TOS or MS-DOS partitions. Will the Spectre/Magic Sac users be left out? An Image backup mode is also supported on these partitions.

Astra was showing its full line of products with its new cases. Astra has one of the best hard drives on the market along with ICD.

Upgrade Editions had its product, Twist. Twist allows you to load several applications in the ST memory (up to 14 on the Mega 4) and use them without ever having to reload or save files. Twist is sold in the U.K. by HiSoft. With MichTron picking up HiSoft's basic, maybe this will be available through MichTron as well.

ViewTouch was showing its touch-screen computer system, known mostly for its restaurant Point of Sale computer system. One can order food and drinks by touching the screen without having to wait for a server. Technology comes to restaurants. Lets see how far this concept spreads.

Visi-Comp Systems was one of the first professional vertical market applications for the ST. It is a complete professional optometric office management system.

IBP from Hannover was showing the 190ST. The 190ST allows you to design a system for different industrial applications, such as a concrete-mixing plant, but different ideas come to our mind, like a more portable computer?? The central unit of the system is equipped with a CPU MC68000 and can be optionally extended by both a math co-processor and the blitter. All sockets are existing. With up to 2 Mbyte of RAM and modular add-ons, the system is set up for quite a few ideas that one may have. We were told that all you need to do is let the people at IBP know what you need your system to do, and they can do it. The graphic resolution of the monitor shown was 640x400 in high res with color being

320x200 in low res and medium being 640x200. We were told that the high picture repetition frequency, noninterlaced with 71 Hz in the monochrome mode, results in a absolutely flicker-free picture. The system is equipped with interfaces all accessible on the front panel, including a centronics printer connection, buffered DMA interface with a transmission rate of 10MBit a second, keyboard with V24 levels and ST records, midi-in/midi-out/midi-thru with 126k baud option and a RS232 interface. This system is Atari ST hardware and software compatible.

IBP also had a HFD2 along, which is a combined hard drive/floppy disk. The floppy had 720 kbyte capabilities, with the hard drive available in 48 or 96 Mbyte. It had a built-in real-time clock and a DMA port looped through. As you can see, we were impressed. Why are WE not seeing these products here in the United States when we are told these products are currently available in Europe? Lets hope this is the start of changes in the U.S. market.

Tozdz Koooperacisa was showing a MS3270 network for approximately \$4,000 from Yugoslavia and an integrated database. We did not even know that Yugoslavia had Atari STs.

On the business end, Logical Design Works was showing LDW Power, its spreadsheet for the Atari ST.

Precision Software was showing Superbase 3.0, which is a major upgrade to Superbase professional. Among its new features, this version comes with telecommunications capabilities, more powerful forms editor and a cross-file file validation and lockup. The telecommunications area supports Xmodem, Xmodem CRC and WXYmodem. Price:\$349.95.

Regent Software was showing its latest version of Regent Base II as

well as a keyboard stiffening springs kit for the 1040 and 520ST to allow you to have a stiffer keyboard. It was noted that this may increase typing speed. They were also showing SQL Database Add-On, their program that brings SQL database capabilities to GFA BASIC.

There were three word processors being shown. Neoept was there with its latest upgrade for WordUp and TurboJet, which is a GDOS driver for the HP DeskJet. WordPerfect was showing the current version of its word processor. There is also a new word processor from Blue Chip due in January. It has graphic capabilities and supports GDOS output. Price:about \$100.

Nice and Software presented a cash-register inventory-control program for the ST called Cricit. It not only has complete cash-register functions but allows you to do everything from daily/period/yearly reporting to customized receipts, coupons, inventory and reporting. It seems to be quite user friendly. There are so many features, we just do not have room to mention them all.

Datafree Industries was presenting an inexpensive order entry/inventory and receivables program. These two programs are quite sufficient for the small-business owner. Price:\$79.95

Turning Point Software was showing Fast Forward Video Systems, which is a networking video-store management system. It has all the features necessary to run a video store.

As you can see, there was definitely a tremendous number of items being displayed at Comdex. We are sure we may have missed some so watch for more detailed reports on specific items in the GENie bulletin board as well as future articles in ST Profile.

Source: ST Profile2, Vol.1, Issue 2, Nov.15, 1988.

Downloaded from GENie by Ed Glertuga.

## SOFTWARE SOURCES

by Roland Laframboise

The following is a partial list of some of the U.S. sources of software available for the ST. In a future issue of Good Taste I'll extend this list and add Canadian sources as well. This list was compiled from various ads in different publications. They include *Antic*, *Compute*, *Computer Play*, *Reset*, *Atari Explorer*, *Start* and *ST Log*.

Most accept Visa and/or Mastercard and have a Toll-Free number, but many of these do not work out of our area code.

1) Lyco Computer Inc.

P.O. Box 5088

Jersey Shore PA 17740

1-717-494-1030

1-800-233-8760

Carry a wide selection of software and hardware.

2) Microtyme

P.O. Box 369

Kettering, Ohio 45409

1-513-294-6236

1-800-255-5835

Carry both hardware and software.

3) Computer Mail Order

101 Reighard Drive

Dept B6 Williamsport PA 17701

1-717-327-9575

1-800-233-8950

Lots of software and hardware.

4) Software Discounters of America

P.O. Box 111327

Dept AT Blawnox PA 15238

1-412-361-5291

1-800-225-7638

Software only.

5) Computability

P.O. Box 17882

Milwaukee Wisconsin 53217

1-414-357-8181

1-800-553-0003

Both hardware and software.

6) E. Arthur Brown Company

3404 Pawnee Drive

Alexandria MN 56308

1-612-763-6393

1-612-762-8847

1-800-322-4405

Have used with success. Good prices on domestic software. Ask for a copy of their newsletter.

7) Computer Games +

Box 6144

Orange CA 92667

1-714-639-8189

1-800-443-8189

Have used more than once. Good prices on domestic software and very good prices on European software. Carries many imported mags including *ST Action*, *ST User*, *Computer+Video Games*, *Games Machine*, *ST/Amiga/Disk*, *The One(ST/Amiga/PC)*. Large

selection of European software.

8) Abby's Discount Software

11 S. Wright Avenue

Fairborn, Ohio 45324

1-513-879-9699

1-800-282-0333

Software and some hardware.

9) ST Plus

P.O. Box 1197

Berkeley CA 94701

1-800-759-1110

Software and some hardware.

10) BRE Software

352 W. Bedford, Suite 104

Fresno CA 93711

1-209-432-2159

1-800-622-7942

Some commercial software but mostly public domain

575 PD titles \$4/disk.

11) Computer Garden

106 W. Carey St.

Plains PA

1-717-823-4025

1-800-456-5689

12) Accusoft Public Domain

P.O. Box 02214

Columbus, Ohio 43202

\$3.25/disk. Check or Money Order

U.S. Funds only

### Take note

The December meeting will not be held because of the holidays. Watch for the January issue of Good Taste for the date of our next meeting.

### In Forthcoming Issues:

- The TASTE Financial Report
- A Look at the Hewlett Packard DeskJet
- A Survey of Taste Members

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